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MISCELLANY



"MADONNA"
SKETCH BY CARTAINO SCARPITTA

A FEW NOVEMBER EXHIBITIONS

DESPITE the drawbacks of the war-time the season for art shows in New York opened with a rush in November. Here is the loan exhibition of Italian primitive paintings at the Kleinberger galleries—in the house on Fifth Avenue formerly the home of Ambassador Gerard—deeply interesting to those who have learned to favor the somewhat harsh work of the men who ushered in the great epoch of Italian painting, and rather surprising as evidence of the extent to which this amiable hobby has ravaged local collectors. At the Montross rooms Cartaino Scarpitta of New York showed a number of portrait busts and suggestions for monumental work such as a crucifixion, an entombment, a caryatid and even bits of fun like "A Little Darky," "Study of a Cat," "Moosette," nay even a head of Lincoln—all as witness to the versa-

tility which he has in common with sculptors of Italian blood. A sketch for a Madonna is shown above. It has a certain formality in face and figure that suggests at once the primitives and the work of much earlier Italians, namely the Etruscans. On this line the sculptor may achieve a monument unusually impressive, for the sketch has the touch of something between sorrow and awe that is but rarely found in religious pictures and sculptures. Scarpitta is particularly good in portraiture—witness the bronze bust of Mr. Peter J. Bahr, the expert in Chinese art, that of the Hon. W. R. Wilcox and those of Mrs. Robert Huntington and Miss C. B. Timken.

At the Knoedler galleries a series of oils by Jonas Lie gives a capital idea of a great copper mine where the ore is taken from the surface, where a

great mountain has been molded into a pyramid with wide terraced steps, on the levels of which terraces trains of cars puff about like minute insects gifted with the power to emit smoke. It is Bingham, Utah, a straggling town set in a forbidding landscape of mountains. Mr. Lie manages to give the feeling of rock-structure, of geological strata, and not a little of the power of ant-like man to model the face of nature. He has his artistic limits, however, for the atmosphere, the aerial perspective is very crude, his brush refusing to tell the finer side of the scene in order to lighten the coarse realism of its oppressiveness. Mr. Lie seems innocent of those expedients that come to artists of greater subtlety in the use of color and of light and shade. Curious and interesting as records of facts, these pictures leave much to be desired on the side of poetry.

The same galleries offer a large collection of etchings by James McBey in which one notes with surprise how versatile is the hand that can draw so many places so well and in so many different styles, from Rembrandt to Goya, from Goya to Whistler. He has his needle at his command in a brilliant fashion; luckily he possesses also taste and love of the picturesque. Making the campaign against the Germans, he includes war topics like "The Somme Front," "Français Inconnus" and "The Sussex Stranded." It is a pleasure to look at drypoints and etchings by so good a workman.

NETHERLANDERS AT THE ARTS

Since the close of the Panama-Pacific Fair at San Francisco the exhibit made by Holland has been "starring" the country and at present is bringing its New York visit to an end at the National Arts Club. A collection of 158 pictures that include a few water-colors and drawings, brought together by Mr. G. E. de Vries, is held to represent the art of easel-painting in the Netherlands. It does not represent it very well, but in such matters one must be content with what can be obtained from living artists, and as for men deceased like Israels, Antoon Mauve, Mattieu and Jakob Maris, one has to put up with such pictures as art dealers or private owners may condescend to lend.

However inadequately, the little exhibit reflects some of the modern views of art fashion and more of the aspects of former times. A breath of the grand style of the old Venetian colorists animates the little figure by Willem van den Berg, a painter and etcher who like many Dutch artists comes of a painter family and has traveled far and wide. "Boy with Bowl of Fruit" stands apart from the plodding realists because it has a gesture of eyes, face and arms that relieves it in a measure from the feeling of convention and pose. Tones of fruit and tunic and curly hair and of the interesting if not beautiful features give it a dull-glowing charm of color. Paler, but still imposing by its broad, simple masses is the little figure of a shepherdess with staff and sheep, a sibyl, ancient figure rather than a "pastoral," as the picture calls itself. There is the big touch of J. B. Millet and the more remote Michelangelo; there is style, if eclectic. Notable also is his "Persian Blue."

Louis van Soest, a Hollander born in Java, who took a medal in St. Louis and has pictures

in several American and many European art galleries, is more than commonly fetching when he tries for the snowscape under soft sunshine. "Winter Sun" is convincing. Clever and sketchy for a distant view but very nice in tones is his "Carnival" with amateur clown singing and playing the mandolin and strollers looking on. In snow and soft wintry atmosphere Martinus Kramer, however, runs him hard—perhaps surpasses him as to the mere brushwork—for Kramer's long literal landscape "Wintertime in Holland" is moist with the very breath of melting snow. But is not in any high sense a picture. It is a section of landscape; apparently any other section were as good.

Literal *genre* goes far in W. S. de Groot's interior: "After the Funeral." Two black-beavered, black-coated, long-visaged men who might have stepped out of a novel by Charles Dickens, and yet have the Holland touch, are drinking "hollands" at a table; their conventional grief is in contrast to the bewildered but genuine trouble of a child in the background. Altogether too literal and photographic is van Walchren's "The Buccaneers" in whose half-nude bodies and insignificant faces one misses every quality of devilishness and daring we must perforce attribute to the scourers of the Spanish Main.

"The Looking Glass" and "Springtime of Life" show Mynheer Nicolaas van der Waay emulous of the fame of *feu* Bouguereau and Cabanel, so handsome are his drawing and coloring in the figure of a peach-bloom girl. These modern Dutchmen appear to have found again the lost red of the sixteenth century, if one may judge by the red robes of these pretty, almost too saccharine girls, clad in most becoming Dutch costume. Hobbe Smith is another realist who prefers the fisher folk; an old, very capable person is that one whose carefully wrought profile portrait we find here. Miss Bertha Gori contributes in water-color the portrait of an old lady wrought in the same patient and exact, uncompromising fashion—not a black mark or a wrinkle omitted. The Hollanders are still strongest in landscape notwithstanding the loss of many of the group that existed parallel with, rather than subsequent to, the Barbizon group of France. If one fails to find men of genius there is evidence enough to show that the patient hand and the judicious eye for nuances in color and form are still part of Dutch mastery.

STATE MUSEUM FOR NEW MEXICO

Santa Fé claims the title of the oldest city in the United States, having been founded a century and a half before the Missions of California. It was long the terminus of the old Santa Fé Trail. Now it is the proud owner of a museum that contains many objects belonging to cliff-dwellers who lived long before Columbus, souvenirs of the Spanish discoverers and most modern paintings setting forth the appearance, habits and customs of latter-day Indians. The museum building reflects the style of Spanish architects of the seventeenth century adapted to the needs of the missionaries. Recently inaugurated, the ceremonies are being followed by a series of tours to the Grand Canyon, San Diego, Pasadena, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Francisco arranged for the visitors who want to see the most interesting scenery and cities